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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Fifth special session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 5th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 19 October 2000, at 4 p.m.

Chairperson: Mr. SIMKHADA (Nepal)

CONTENTS

LETTER DATED 3 OCTOBER 2000 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ALGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA ADDRESSED TO THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (continued)

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GE.00-15644 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 4.20 p.m.

LETTER DATED 3 OCTOBER 2000 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ALGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA ADDRESSED TO THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (agenda item 3) (continued) (E/CN.4/S-5/L.2/Rev.1)

1. Mr. BEN SALEM (Tunisia), introducing draft resolution E/CN.4/S-5/L.2/Rev.1 on behalf of its sponsors, said that the draft resolution expressed deep concern at the gross violations of human rights which had been committed by the Israeli occupying Power and which constituted war crimes and crimes against humanity under international law. Emphasizing that the Commission had to assume its full responsibilities with regard to the violations and steer away from any political considerations, he said that the draft resolution called for a number of practical measures: an independent, objective commission of inquiry should be established to gather information on violations of human rights and should submit its conclusions and recommendations to the Commission; and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Rapporteurs should visit the occupied Palestinian territories and report their findings to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-seventh session and to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session.

2. Although the draft resolution related only to the human rights situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, one regional group had, despite every effort to ensure transparency, been reluctant to engage in a substantive discussion. He hoped, however, that the support with which the request to convene the special session had been met would prevail and that the draft resolution could be adopted by consensus.

3. Mr. FULLER (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the Western Group, said that more time was required for further consultations before a decision was taken on the draft resolution.

4. Mr. RODRÍGUEZ CEDEÑO (Venezuela), speaking on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC), said that he agreed with the representative of the United Kingdom. In view of the seriousness and sensitivity of the issue, more time might be needed to draft a text acceptable to all.

5. Mr. BEN SALEM (Tunisia) said that he could agree to the request for more time to consider the draft resolution, provided that a decision was taken on the text immediately after the informal consultations ended.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.